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SUBJECT: PART 1 OF 2: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS AHEAD OF THE
SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTION: RESPONSE TO C-AL9-00425

REF: A. PRETORIA 02576

[1](#)B. DURBAN 000011

[1](#)C. DURBAN 000024

[1](#)D. PRETORIA 000451

[1](#)E. PRETORIA 000484

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[1](#)M. 08 PRETORIA 2650

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[1](#)P. 08 PRETORIA 2764

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR RAYMOND L. BROWN FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)
AND (D).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) This cable is part 1 of 2 in response to C-AL9-00425 received on March 9. Reftels refer to parts 1 and 2. The structure below follows a question and answer format and includes Reftels where applicable. Post has sent in nearly 100 cables since September 2008 covering many of the questions raised below so this cable in many ways serves as an update for those unfamiliar with our wide body of reporting or with the ongoing state of play in the country. Post intends to send in an Elections Scen setter in coming days to give insight into the situation here ahead of the South African poll. End Summary.

WHICH COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS ARE FINANCING THE
VARIOUS PARTIES AND WHAT DO THEY EXPECT IN RETURN?

[1](#)2. (C) Financing remains a key collection gap for all observers of South African dynamics. There is no requirement that donors nor recipients publicly report contributions or their source. However, there are anecdotal reports of how the African National Congress (ANC) has received funding for this election. The ANC first relies on key donors allied to the party, such as Tokyo Sexwale and Cyril Ramaphosa, to bankroll campaign efforts. This has long been a past practice of the ANC and appears to be continuing in this

election. Second, there are reports that companies that have benefited from Black Economic Empowerment deals are providing funds to the ANC. Pretoria Poloff met numerous businessmen at the ANC's manifesto launch in East London earlier this year who have connections to the ANC and attended the rally to ensure their business support was seen by ANC party stalwarts. Additionally, at the ANC Gala dinner the night before the manifesto launch, Cape Town Poloff observed Patrice Motsepe, Executive Chairman of African Rainbow Minerals and the wealthiest man in South Africa sitting at one of the head tables. Although two SAG Ministers were also seated at the same table as Motsepe, all eyes were on the South African businessman. Motsepe was the first (and sometimes only) person at the table greeted by many prominent members of the ANC, signifying his importance as an ANC financial backer. Lastly, prominent author William Gumede told Poloff and Econoff on March 11 that he has heard stories of the ANC calling senior Amalgamated Banks of South Africa (ABSA) executives into Luthuli House to ensure the group's financial support ahead of the election. Large companies like ABSA and mining giant Anglo-American reportedly have a policy of donating money to parties, distributing the funds based on their percentage of representation in Parliament. Mosiuoa Lekota told US diplomats on March 12 that groups such as the Congress of the People (COPE) are struggling for Qas the Congress of the People (COPE) are struggling for funding because of such guidelines. However, in press reports this week and confirmed to Cape Town Poloff by COPE member Avril Harding, SAB Miller changed their donation strategy, which had previously been to donate proportionally based on Parliament representation, and donated money to COPE. Even with this donation, COPE is still struggling to raise funds. One of the clearest examples of COPE,s struggle to fund its campaign is the lack of posters. Harding told Cape Town Poloff that no posters have been put

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up around the Western Cape because COPE does not have the money to replenish them if they are torn down. COPE is waiting to hang the posters closer to the election date.

13. (C) Although cash poor, COPE reportedly is relying on funds from businesses connected to former Gauteng premier Mbhazima Shilowa and former ANC businessman Saki Macozoma. Gumede noted that even with these bankrollers for the new party, it will not be enough to counter the wealth of Ramaphosa and Sexwale.

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES' POLLING
EFFORTS?
HOW DO THE MAJOR PARTIES USE POLLING DATA?

14. (C) In the 15 years since the end of apartheid, few professional survey research and election polling institutions have emerged to carry out opinion and preference polls for elections. As a result, polling in South Africa remains sporadic, costly, and contradictory. First, polling is sporadic, representing a snapshot rather than a data trial over time. According to University of Witswatersrand professor Roger Southall, ANC Treasurer Matthews Phosa last year approached the university to conduct a public poll ahead of the April 22 election. Southall noted in a meeting with Poloff last year that after the university put together a plan -- including some survey questions -- for the ANC's polling effort, he never heard again from Phosa. Southall surmised that the ANC was not happy with the way in which the survey questions were crafted and was concerned that the timing would not have given the party space to address some of the results. (See Reftel A for more information.) Second, polling is costly. Two of the major polling firms in the country, Markinor and Grant Thornton, known more for market and consumer preference polling, are regularly cited as too costly for most political parties. Moreover, Prince Mashele told Poloff last year the Institute of Security

Studies discontinued its quarterly crime survey with Nedbank because of cost overruns. The cheapest types of non-specialist polling are conducted by the major newspapers such as the "Sunday Times" and "Mail and Guardian." However, such surveys are not scientific or complete, as they mostly rely on calling mobile phones, a method that tends to over sample urban and relatively affluent populations. Third, polls are contradictory. Democratic Alliance leaders told the Durban CG and visiting Pretoria Poloff earlier this year that it commissioned two polls last year that gave completely contradictory results. The DA officials admitted that it was hard to make decisions based on such data, but noted that there were some helpful trendlines. The party did not say where the results came from, but did share their perspectives on COPE based on the results. (See Reftel B for more information.)

15. (C) Most political parties appear to rely on unscientific "polls" to gauge popular support. ANC supporters in East London told Poloff earlier this year that seeing the size of campaign rallies in townships was a good way to understand popular support for a party. (Note: The supporters did not mention that parties often bus supporters to rallies to boost the numbers in attendance. Nor does such an observation distinguish between truly committed supporters and the merely Qdistinguish between truly committed supporters and the merely curious. End Note.) They also noted that the number of political party campaign posters and other signs posted in areas across the country was a good indication of what areas support a political party. Some political analysts offer a corollary to such methods, noting that seeing signs torn down in an area also offers an indication of support in an area.

WHAT ARE THE INDICATIONS THAT POLITICAL PARTIES ARE WORRIED ABOUT INTIMIDATION OR VIOLENCE EITHER AGAINST THEM OR PERPETRATED BY THEIR MEMBERS, AND WHAT ARE THEY WILLING TO DO TO STOP IT? OR IS THERE ANY EVIDENCE THAT THEY ARE ENCOURAGING IT?

16. (C) All political parties are concerned about intimidation and violence against them and perpetrated by their members. The most recent example of this concern is the signing of a "Code of Conduct" at the "Code of Conduct" ceremony hosted by the Independent Electoral Commission on

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March 11. At the ceremony, every political party competing in the election publicly signed their pledge against fomenting election-related violence. Political parties such as the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), COPE, and the ANC all pledged to run peaceful campaigns and punish those supporters who perpetrate hate against opponents. There have been isolated incidents of election-related violence in KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape, and Free State, but so far the angry rhetoric between leaders in IFP and ANC has been the most worrying trend. Even as national leaders say that cooperation between parties is solid, there have been accusations and anger directed at senior leaders. United Democratic Movement (UDM) President Bantu Holomisa told the diplomatic corps last month that he was not concerned about violence, but was concerned about intimidation at rallies and meetings. Lekota has echoed those concerns, saying that COPE rallies are routinely disturbed by the ANC and that such behavior is more damaging than violence in the run-up to the election. (See Reftels C and D for more information.)

WHAT ARE THE INDICATIONS THAT ELECTION WORKERS IN THE FIELD ARE RECEIVING CLEAR CAMPAIGN MESSAGES FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE HEADQUARTERS? DO THE NATIONAL/PROVINCIAL LEADERS THINK THEIR MESSAGES ARE GETTING THROUGH TO THE GRASSROOTS CADRES?

17. (C) Post assesses that election workers in the field are receiving clear campaign messages from their respective

headquarters, with the exception of COPE. COPE seems to be struggling to build local branches and to maintain support given its leadership struggles. (See Reftel D for more information.) Post judges that national and provincial leaders in some parties, such as the ANC and COPE, are less concerned with getting through to the grassroots supporters than with locking up powerbases in critical constituencies, such as middle-class university graduates or senior levels of their parties. In a meeting with CG Durban, the DA noted that it has been busy reaching out to constituents across the country to ways of addressing their concerns. (See Reftel B for more information.)

IS THE INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION (IEC) CARRYING
OUT A GOOD-FAITH EFFORT TO REGISTER ALL ELIGIBLE VOTERS
AND WORKING TO CORRECT POTENTIAL INVALID ENTRIES IN THE
VOTER REGISTER?

18. (C) The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) is carrying forward a good-faith effort to register all eligible voters, holding several voter registration weekends and encouraging new voters to register via SMS, Internet, and television campaigns. From all indications, the IEC is ready for this election and has taken steps to ensure that the international community can deem the poll free and fair. The March 12 ruling that will allow registered South Africans living overseas to vote is another example of the IEC making a good faith effort to include all South Africans in this poll. (See Reftel E for more information.)

IS THE IEC ABLE TO ACT IMPARTIALLY AND
INDEPENDENTLY? CAN IT CARRY OUT ITS TASKS
WITHOUT GOVERNMENT PRESSURE TO FAVOR ANC
CANDIDATES? DOES IT HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING
FROM THE GOVERNMENT?
QFROM THE GOVERNMENT?

19. (C) The IEC operates autonomously from the government and the ruling party. It has a budget driven by its own internal estimates which is funded by the Treasury without reference to the President, Parliament, or any other agency. It maintains a headquarters staff as well as provincial offices that answer to the IEC leadership. The IEC has carried out preparations in an efficient and transparent manner that has garnered more registered voters than ever before. The IEC is well-funded and runs independently of the government. The IEC has said at previous meetings with US diplomats that it has enough funds to operate successfully without money from the donor community. The IEC in all elections since 1994 has a solid track record of acting impartially and independently; this election looks to be no different. (See Septel for more information.)

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IS THE GOVERNMENT OR ANC TRYING TO COVERTLY
INFLUENCE PRIVATE MEDIA, SUCH AS BY PAYING
REPORTERS TO RUN STORIES FAVORABLE TO THE
ANC OR INTIMIDATING REPORTERS WHO RUN
UNFAVORABLE STORIES?

110. (C) The government does try to influence private media, but generally not by covert means. Much of what the ANC tries to do to push forward its message takes place openly across the country. The ANC runs an effective communications program headed by Jesse Duarte, who is very good at addressing messages and stories while also answering questions and staying on point. The ANC tries to influence (rather than intimidate) what is written in the mainstream press, with less success as many newspapers are divided into

camps either sympathetic to current government interests or to the interests of former President Thabo Mbeki and the business community. ANC leaders do a good job of penning editorials that address what is in the news and draw attention from readers. The ANC specifically tries to influence stories on the South African Broadcasting Corporation's television and radio programs. The Embassy's Public Affairs Press Attache says that SABC is not entirely slanted despite some claims to the contrary. However, the Attache notes that political infighting remains and will not be going away anytime soon. An important point to keep in mind when assessing the ANC's relationship with the media is that the party sees two audiences: 1) its popular constituency and 2) the international community and the chattering classes. The party, for the most part, does an effective job at balancing both audiences.

WHAT ARE THE INDICATIONS THAT SOME POLITICAL PARTIES
HAVE ENTERED OR PLAN TO ENTER INTO POLITICAL
COALITIONS FOLLOWING THE ELECTION?

¶11. (C) Local analysts and activists believe that the ANC's majority in Parliament will suffer erosion in this election. This carries the prospect that strategic coalitions among opposition parties may be able to block or amend ANC legislation initiatives for the first time since 1994. Representatives from every major political party have told Poloff that they have no plans to form coalitions until after the election. Currently, the most likely coalitions include partnerships in strategic situations involving COPE, the DA, the UDM, and the Independent Democrats (ID). COPE leaders have said repeatedly that the party has no plans to form alliances until after the election. Lekota's personal assistant told Poloff this month that COPE would be working with the UDM after the election on a possible coalition, but would be unlikely to work with DA leader Helen Zille. He said, "We have no idea what she is doing." He said that the party is focused on winning Eastern Cape and Limpopo, but may not perform as strongly in other provinces. He noted, "If we had money we could compete with anyone, but funding has not come fast enough." He said that the party would do everything to form coalitions to keep a check on the ANC. Furthermore, COPE's Presidential candidate, Reverend Dandala, said at a Cape Town Press Club lunch on March 19, that COPE would not form a coalition with the ANC. (For Qthat COPE would not form a coalition with the ANC. (For reasons why an alliance between COPE and the ANC may be unlikely see Reftel F.) The UDM, for its part, has said it would be open to working with COPE. Holomisa met with Poloff in February and said that the party would consider forming coalitions after the election results are announced "if forming an alliance makes sense." According to the UDM leadership, it makes most sense for the party to seek a partnership with COPE. However, presently there have not been talks about such a relationship.

¶12. (C) Meanwhile, the DA has said that it is the "trusted hand" in coalitions and would be open to working with other parties. (See Reftel B for more information.) The DA's leadership of the coalition municipal government in Cape Town has proven effective at addressing the public's needs and staving off ANC efforts to restabilize or replace them. The party has criticized COPE and the ID for working too closely with the ANC. Ryan Coetzee, number one on the DA's Western Cape list, told Cape Town Poloff the DA is happy to work with COPE in a coalition, but would not align themselves with the

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ANC, "because the whole purpose of forming a coalition is to increase democracy by decreasing the ANC's power." William Gumede told Poloff on March 11 that he can see ID leader Patricia De Lille selling her party out to the ANC after the polls. He thought some in COPE might push for a coalition with the ANC, but for many that would "prove too difficult

and would raise the question of why they defected in the first place."

WHAT ARE THE INDICATIONS THAT POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE DEVELOPED TAILORED CAMPAIGNS TO WIN VOTES AMONG SOUTH AFRICA'S MAJOR CONSTITUENCIES (SUCH AS TRADE UNIONISTS, RURAL POOR, URBAN POOR, BLACK MIDDLE CLASS, OR VARIOUS ETHNIC GROUPS?)

¶13. (C) All political parties to some extent have tailored their messages to key constituencies, underscoring the limits of broadbased political activity in the country. The ANC is campaigning heavily in urban townships and predominately black suburbs of the country while limiting their campaigning in white areas or colored areas. The one exception to this appears in Western Cape, where the ANC is most vulnerable and has opted to campaign in many white suburbs with posters in Afrikaans. The ANC's campaign efforts suggest that the party is primarily targeting its core supporters of black, urban, and poor voters. Meanwhile, COPE is campaigning heavily in areas with traditional leaders, at churches, and in suburbs across the country. (Note: COPE has had mixed success campaigning in urban townships outside Western Cape, suggesting that it is easier for the party to campaign among middle class voters. End Note.) COPE's strategy suggests the party is looking for support among traditional leaders and among middle class voters. The DA is campaigning in its strongholds in Western Cape and in major urban areas, focusing on colored, Indian, and new voters as well as progressive whites. However, its campaign demonstrates the difficulty the party is having to achieve its ultimate strategy of attracting black voters to reverse the popular perception that it does not appeal to blacks. See Reftel B for more information. The Freedom Front Plus (FF) is campaigning heavily in Afrikaans-speaking suburbs across the country and seemingly has written off trying to win support among black or colored voters in some major areas. Political scientist and former chief of the ANC's land affairs department Leslie Dikeni told Poloff and Econoff on March 11 that all political parties are ignoring the rural voter. The ANC expects poor rural blacks to vote for the ANC even without targeted appeals for their support.

WHAT ARE THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES OF THE VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES?

¶14. (C) The parties communicate via websites, community radio, text messages, political rallies, and -- for the first time ever -- through television advertisements. All major political parties have highly developed websites where information is readily available and where party members can donate money. Parties, especially COPE, have embraced social-networking sites such as facebook.com. As of mid-March, COPE had roughly 20,000 facebook members. All of COPE's leadership are registered on facebook.com and QCOPE's leadership are registered on facebook.com and regularly respond to questions via the site. Parties share news and information through SMS messages and can accept party contributions through text messages. Parties use political rallies to spread their campaign messages, which was clear when parties launched their manifestos earlier this year. (See Reftels G-J for more information.) (Note: Parties also use rally size to indicate campaign success. End Note.) Parties are now communicating via television advertisements. This is the first election where such campaigning is allowed and the ANC was the first party to show a campaign advertisement on television; COPE, the DA, and the IFP intend to follow course on such advertising. Less educated and poor black rural voters do not often have televisions or read the newspapers, so local community radio has become the best option for reaching them with party campaign appeals.

(C) WHAT ARE THE INDICATIONS THAT THE ANC LEADERSHIP

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VIEWS JACOB ZUMA'S CONTINUING LEGAL SITUATION AS A PROBLEM?

¶15. (C) The ANC on March 17 became a party in the legal case against Jacob Zuma. (See Reftel K for more information.) The party since Polokwane in December 2007 has fully supported Zuma as its leader and has not wavered in its support; this is clear in nearly every party statement and at nearly every party event. Party leaders insist that under party rules ratified in Polokwane, the ANC's president will indeed be their candidate for the national presidency. The party is selective in showing public support for Zuma and seems to rely on appearing at court appearances where the ANC leader is expected to win. Yet, the party vociferously defends Zuma's right to become the next state leader and decries those who argue the existence of corruption charges should preclude him from the presidency. Although claims of Zuma's innocence are muted, there remain strong allegations that he is being politically persecuted as other people have engaged in acts more objectionable than he has. Reminding all listeners that Zuma is innocent until proven guilty, the ANC insists on his right to lead South Africa as he has yet to be convicted of anything. (See Reftel L for more information.) There are reports that some senior leaders are concerned that Zuma's legal troubles could cast a cloud over the party's agenda, but some still view it as an opportunity for self-advancement rather than merely a negative for the party. According to an ANC insider, many in the ANC believe Nelson Mandela's recent appearance at an ANC rally in the Eastern Cape was done as a trade off between him and Zuma. It is speculated that Mandela agreed to appear at the rally on the condition that Zuma steps down as the ANC presidential candidate if his legal troubles continue to escalate. ANC Secretary General Gwede Mantashe told reporters on March 17 that Zuma would stand down if he loses his court case this year and is convicted of money laundering, racketeering, corruption, and fraud charges. The ANC's legal adviser, in a meeting earlier this year with visiting Pretoria Poloff and Cape Town Econoff, hit strongly on the point that the time it has taken to bring Zuma to trial has unfairly prejudiced potential judges against him, a point emphasized by many within the ruling party even as some admitted privately that the course of justice should be followed.

(C) IS THE NATIONAL ANC LEADERSHIP DIRECTING
ELECTION-RELATED CORRUPTION, SUCH AS FOOD FOR VOTES SCHEMES?
IF SO, DOES THE ANC USE STATE RESOURCES FOR SUCH SCHEMES, AS
OPPOSED TO PARTY FUNDS?

¶16. (C) There are credible reports that the ANC, on the local level, has used party resources to provide grants and food for hard-pressed voters. Yet, Post has seen no indication of the ANC leadership using public funds to direct election-related benefits such as food-for-votes schemes. There are anecdotal reports that the ANC is focusing on areas it has ignored during the past five years to boost its votes in certain areas, but there is no evidence that the party is using state resources for election-related corruption. The ANC, however, is using state resources for its campaign. The QANC, however, is using state resources for its campaign. The party used a national helicopter to carry President Kgalema Motlanthe into East London for the ANC's party manifesto launch. Moreover, the press has been featuring numerous stories about the cost of Zuma's bodyguards, which reportedly runs into the hundreds of thousands. Zuma has 24-hour protection despite the fact that he is a party candidate -- not a government official. The ANC has justified the use of bodyguards by claiming that as a former Deputy President he is entitled to protection. (See Reftel J for more information.)

(C) WHAT IS BALEKA MBETE'S BACKGROUND? WHAT IS MBETE'S
AGENDA AND WHO ARE HER BIGGEST SUPPORTERS IN THE ANC?

¶17. (C) Deputy President Baleka Mbete is a longstanding member of the ANC, having served on the ANC's National Executive Committee since 1991. She has been a member of Parliament since 1994 and served on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission during the 1990s. She was Deputy Speaker of Parliament from 1996 to 2004 before becoming the Speaker of Parliament. As a former Secretary General of the

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ANC's Women's League she brings strong support from the organization to both the deputy presidency and to her position as National Chairperson of the ANC. Many pundits and political analysts, including columnist Patrick Laurence, were shocked when Zuma won support from the Women's League at Polokwane in 2007, but commentators say ANC officials such as Mbete played a key role in Zuma's ascension to the party presidency.

¶18. (C) Her biggest supporters in the ANC include both Zuma and Motlanthe, who reportedly view her as a compromise candidate in broader ANC power struggles and see her as a way to carry forward the mandate of gender balance within the ruling party. If nothing changes to the ANC's final list submitted to the IEC, Mbete would no longer be Deputy President after the election.

(C) WHO IN THE ANC IS CONSIDERING TRANSFERRING LOYALTIES
TO THE CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE (COPE)?

¶19. (C) There is endless speculation that Mbeki will join COPE and there are reports that he is assisting the party in policy formation. (See Reftels C and L for more information.) However, so far there is little concrete evidence that Mbeki will make his support public either now or in the future. Moreover, there is the question of whether Mbeki's coming out in favor of COPE would provide the party with a big boost ahead of the election. Many political analysts and pundits such as University of South Africa professor Dirk Kotze and Witswatersrand University professor Daryl Glaser have told Poloff in recent months that Mbeki support for the party could backfire as many see him as having failed in some areas of governance during the past ten years. There is speculation that Frank Chikane, Sydney Mufamadi, and Motlanthe could defect either before or after the election. Clearly, since Mbeki's forced resignation in September 2008, a major impetus for the formation of COPE is found in the alienation of former ANC members who were Mbeki supporters who feel like Zuma supporters in the ANC forced them out.

LA LIME